



SURVIVING THE HOLIDAYS

GRACE FELLOWSHIP HALL

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 2

4:00-6:00 P.M.

CALL 937.399.6257 TO REGISTER

Grace Messenger

December 2018

Call Committee Update

Including our first meeting in late September, Grace's Call Committee will have gathered at least 5 times by the time this article is printed. We also helped organize the valuable Congregational Workshop led by Pastor Amy Little and Pastor Patti Morlock on October 13. We were pleased that there were approximately 75 members of Grace who actively participated in that important step of the Call process. A number of those individuals have since offered additional input regarding one of the topics we didn't have time to address fully that day – i.e. what specific gifts Grace is looking for in its next Senior Pastor.

On behalf of the Call Committee, I'd like to thank all those who attended the Congregational Workshop and shared their input either in that setting or in subsequent communications with us. We believe strongly that effective 2-way communication is vital to the Call process, and we have committed to do everything possible to keep members of Grace up-to-date as to where we are. We are also very much interested in hearing your thoughts and answering any questions that you might have along the way. Please feel free to speak directly with any of the following Call Committee members at any time!

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|------------------------|----------------|----------------------|
| Ty Craddock | Michelle Kouse | Matt Rugh (Co-Chair) |
| Mark Grimes (Co-Chair) | Jane Kreider | Maxine Shroyer |
| Ginger Hennig | Tom O'Neal | Sandy Thompson |

As at least a pair of previous Messenger articles have indicated, now that Grace's Council has created a Call Committee and the Congregational Workshop has been held, the next step in the Call process is the creation of a Congregational Profile. This describes the ministries, goals, mission and vision of our congregation and will be based in part on input offered during and after the Congregational Workshop. It will also reflect the specific gifts that Grace is seeking in its next Senior Pastor. The recent Long Range Planning Team provided some valuable input for this, as well.

Once the completed Congregational Profile is submitted to the NALC, the future opening at Grace will be publicized, and this profile will be made available to pastors who might wish to be considered for a Call to our congregation. The NALC's Assistant to the Bishop will also identify Pastoral Profiles that appear to be a good "match" for Grace. At this point, the Call Committee will review and discuss all Pastoral Profiles received and schedule conversations/ interviews with all potential candidates. We will eventually vote to narrow this to one candidate who will be proposed to Grace's Council.

The Council will then schedule a visit for this candidate to come to Grace – see our congregation and our community, meet with our Council, lead/preach at worship, be in conversation with Grace members, etc. A special Congregational Meeting will then be held in which our membership will vote to extend a Call to this candidate. The candidate will have 30 days to respond in writing.

It's important to note that there are 3 votes during this process: 1) the Call Committee's selection of a candidate to be proposed to Council; 2) the Council's approval of the candidate to be proposed to the congregation; and 3) the congregation's vote to extend the actual Call to the candidate.

The Call Committee is moving forward diligently and prayerfully in a process that clearly has many steps and involves many people. We ask that you continue to pray for us and for Grace as we work to discern whom God has selected as our next Senior Pastor.—Mark Grimes

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The Season of Advent

The Season of Advent (beginning Sunday, December 2nd) is a 4-Sunday season leading believers to the glorious celebration of Jesus' birth in Bethlehem. This is the season that begins The Christian Church Year, a season of spiritual preparation amidst the fast-paced-seasonal preparations going on all around us. As we worship during these coming weeks, and as the world around us asks "Are you ready for Christmas?" we ask ourselves and one another: "Are you ready for Christ?" Come to worship and invite God to more fully prepare you for the wonderful gift that is Jesus!

Be sure and pick up and utilize the 2018 Advent Devotional booklet, written by our Grace staff. Time in God's Word, time in worship with God's family, and time in personal, spiritual preparation are gifts God offers to all hearts open to receiving Him. As we sing in the great Christmas hymn "O Little Town of Bethlehem": *How silently, how silently the wondrous gift is given! So God imparts to human hearts the blessings of his heaven. No ear may hear his coming; but in this world of sin, where meek souls will receive him, still, the dear Christ enters in.*

Advent Midweek Worship

Toward the goal of helping us all be spiritually prepared for the coming of our Lord, we will worship at 7:00 p.m. on the Thursdays of December 6, 13, and 20. Our 3-part sermon series is titled "These Belong to God" and focuses upon the concluding statement of The Lord's Prayer: *"For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory, forever and ever. Amen."* During the hustle and bustle of these demanding weeks, why not give yourself the 'gift' of a candle-lit-hour in Christian fellowship, prayer, and worship?

Christmas Eve Worship

We will worship at 6:30 and 9:00 p.m. on Christmas Eve, Monday, December 24, 2018! Both worship opportunities will include The Festival of Lights [candlelight and singing 'Silent Night'] and The Sacrament of Holy Communion. Our 6:30 p.m. service is created/offered with families and children in mind, highlighted by The Stable Procession, a Children's Sermon, children's choir, and more. Our 9:00 p.m. service is designed/offered to be more contemplative, including our Sanctuary Choir and other wonderful, seasonal music. Plan to be in worship at Grace this Christmas Eve and invite your family members, friends, and neighbors.

The Disciple-Making Culture at Grace

Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age." Matthew 28:19-20 (NIV)

For the past few years God has been preparing the Grace congregation to expand its disciple-making. That started four years ago with the Learning Leadership Team being trained by the Navigators. The Navigators is a worldwide Christian organization. Its purpose is the discipling of Christians with a particular emphasis on enabling them to share their faith with others. Many small groups were started to study the Bible and to foster Christian fellowship and accountability. After the training was over the Culture Crew was assigned the task of fostering the continuation of the importance of Bible reading and disciple-making.

On October 23, 2018, twenty-nine Grace members gathered to learn more about Life to Life groups, the next phase of Grace's disciple-making ministry. Soon these people will be inviting 2-3 friends or neighbors to join them in reading the Bible together. These Bible reading groups will use the Swedish method of reading the Bible. This method does not require advance preparation and works well for beginners and for those who have done a lot of Bible reading. It involves highlighting one to three things that stand out to you, one to three things that create a question for you, and anything that applies personally to your life.

If you are interested in joining a Life to Life group to read the Bible with others, contact one of the members of the Culture Crew: Amy Fraker, Darla Kalifoot, Jim Kreckman, Lori Fain, Sam Poston, Dean Settles, Beth Szekacs, Sheryl Wineberg, and Pastors Brodbeck and Powell. They would be happy to answer any of your questions and help connect you with a group.

Praying that you will be led to join us.

New Members!

Our Pastors are convening the November 18th gathering of our potential new Grace members, meeting at Grace that afternoon from 2:30-5:30 p.m. This is an informal, and informative, opportunity to learn more about Grace...our ministries, members, and mission. All who feel so led to become members of Grace will be received into membership during our 10:45 a.m. worship on Sunday, December 2nd. Receiving new members, sisters and brothers in the faith, is always a time of joy and gratitude around Grace! Please call 399-6257 to let us know you plan to attend our New Member's Class.



NALC's Disaster Response Update

Mary Bates was invited to give an overview of the NALC's Disaster Response program this past month at Grace. Mary has been directing this program since the NALC was constituted on August 27, 2010. On an annual average basis the NALC has responded to NALC mission districts with as much as \$1.2 million and 2,000 volunteer disaster responders coming from across the nation to help restore people's lives physically and spiritually. Grace was not hesitant in responding to Mary's plea for help by a pledge to fill a 26-ft. truck with gently used furniture. In mid-October the truck arrived at the Carolina disaster distribution point where the furniture was immediately given to many deserving families. Grace, as a congregation, will continue to look for more ways to serve this much needed mission. Thanks be to God. - Steven Schumacher

THIRD ANNUAL SPRINGFIELD MANOR CHRISTMAS PARTY

Mark your calendars now for **Sunday, December 9** at 2:30 p.m. for our third annual worship and Christmas party with the Springfield Manor residents!

Each year we have had a joyous celebration of the birth of our Savior while blessing and being blessed by our friends at the Manor. Please join us for worship, light refreshments and fellowship!

Quilting Sew-a-thon

The Service Quilt Guild has received many compliments for the display for the Blessing of the Quilts, as well as questions about their use, where they go, and how to quilt. Several people have stated they would like to become involved in the quilt-making process, but due to work and school schedules are unable to make Thursday meetings.

So, in response, we would like to plan a Quilting Sew-a-thon some Saturday after the holidays, but before Lent. Interested folks would bring their sewing machines to sew squares. Those who want to help assemble quilts, can come and learn the technique requested by Lutheran World Relief. We can also use people to serve as Cutters (with scissors) and Knotters. Tasks anyone can do.

We hope to make this a fun-fellowship day, with a light lunch at break time. If interested sign up at Sign-Up Central in the Sunday Service bulletin, so we can get an idea if anyone, or how many would be interested.

For more information, contact Susan Truchses at 324-4329 or email at srtruchses@gmail.com.

Christmas Food Baskets

Grace is participating in the Christmas food basket ministry along with other local Lutheran churches. Grace's goal is to assemble 40 completed boxes, which will be distributed to people in need in time for Christmas.

Food donations may be dropped off in the community center at Grace, Nov. 18 through Dec. 16. Each completed box will contain the following items: 6 cans of vegetables, 3 cans fruit, 6 cans of soup, 2 cans of cranberries, 1 large box of stuffing, 1 large box of mashed potatoes, 1 large box of cereal, 8 pack of ramen noodles and 3 boxes of macaroni and cheese.

Food in glass containers cannot be accepted. The purpose of the ministry is to provide a Christmas meal for families and enough other food items for meals for another day or so. Christmas baskets for 200 needy families (four or more people) will be distributed at St. John's Lutheran Church

Volunteers are needed to help assemble the boxes at Grace on Sunday, Dec. 16, and later that week for the transport the boxes to St. John's Lutheran Church, setup and distribution. Look for more details in Sign-Up Central in the bulletin. If you are willing to donate your time, or have any questions about the ministry, contact Barbara Maxwell (barbosu71@aol.com or 342-8626).



Charity Guild Distributes Pillows for Veterans

The ladies and gentleman of the Charity Guild worked very hard on various

pillow styles to be completed by Veteran's Day—and they did!!!! We supported the patients at Oakwood Village and also the United Senior Center. Then we displayed our pillows at church on Sunday, November 11, and they were all taken by members of our congregation. We also delivered pillows to some of our shut-ins and they were graciously received.